

This article explains what everyone needs to do before, during and after a hurricane. It lists what a person do to prepare and stock for a natural disaster.

There is nothing more scary then mother nature at her wildest. Hurricanes fall into this category in a big way. This article discusses being prepared for a hurricane as well as what to do during one. The one thing to remember, as in any dangerous situation, is to stay calm and do not panic. You must stay clear headed at all times.

How do I prepare for a hurricane?

It is advisable for families living in any area where hurricanes can develop to have a survival pack ready at all times. (Even during the off season as you will never know when a different type of storm leaves you vulnerable.) This kit should contain the following items and be stored in a place that is safe and easily accessible in the case of emergencies.

1. First-Aid Kit: Band-Aids, bandages, antibiotic ointment, burn ointment, ice and heating packs (the kind you shake or squeeze to activate), over the counter pain relievers/ fever reducers, tweezers, eye wash, clean wash clothes, paper towels and anything else you can think of that may be needed based on your particular families needs. (Make sure to have any prescription medications, asthma inhalers and the like within easy reach to grab in case of a quick need of a different type of shelter. A good way to not forget about these in the heat of the moment is to tape a large note on the front of this kit reminding you to grab them.)

2. Fresh Water: Include enough drinking water for your family (It is advised to have one gallon a day per person.) and any pets as well as distilled water to wash out any cuts or scrapes. Paper cups are also advisable.

3. Food: This has to be non-perishable items that do not need to be heated in the event of power outages. Remember to include a can opener in your kit along with paper plates and plastic silver ware. Don't forget any pet's dietary needs as well as dishes to serve their meals in.

4. Flashlights/Candles: Remember to pack batteries and matches!

5. A Battery Operated Radio: Make sure to change the batteries every six months.
6. Board Games/Cards/Activity Kits: No sense the kids having absolutely no fun during your adventure!
7. Women's Feminine Products: We all know that it can come at the worst of times!
8. Blankets, Jackets and Extra Clothes: You need extras of everything just in case someone needs something dry to put on or it gets really chilly.
9. No Wash Hand Sanitizer/Baby or Cleansing wipes: These are lifesavers in themselves if you need to save on water.
10. Anything else your family thinks they may need if they are confined for a few days with nowhere to go. It is good to have supplies to last up to a week (7 full days) just in case. Don't forget the special needs of babies or any elderly persons in your family.

Make sure to have all of your important records (licenses, certificates, medical records etc.) in a fire proof box that is easy to take with you. This also goes for any pets important records (shots, license, current photograph etc.)

Your family should have a disaster plan in effect that includes the following things:

1. A list of the safest places in your house to go during a hurricane.
2. If there is a need to relocate somewhere else, everyone should know at least three different escape routes from your home as well as alternate ways to get to the safe location. (The quickest may be obstructed.) You should have a specific meeting place for everyone in case of separation.
3. Have one out of state relative that is an outside contact person. This way everyone knows who to call and keep updated in case of separation.
4. If at all possible have all the family members take CPR and First-aid classes to be prepared in the event of a medical emergency.

5. Have all the emergency numbers posted by the phone and make sure then any younger children at least know how to call 911.

Make sure that all pets have an identification collar on at all times and that everyone know where to locate leashes, carrying crates etc. in case of having to make a quick getaway.

What should I do during a hurricane?

If you decide to stay at your home during the storm the following three safety tips should be followed:

1. Stay in the safest place of your home (away from doors and windows) at all times, until the all clear sounds. Even if it seems that the storm as calmed down, many times the winds will return with no warning and a lot of force.

2. Turn off your gas, electricity and water to minimize the possibility of fire or flooding (at least from internal problems).

3. Listen to the radio for any updates on local weather reports and make sure that it is safe to leave before anyone does. Do not go outside to check anything!

If you choose to go to shelter during a hurricane (which you definitely should if you are pregnant, have a serious illness or one that could become serious or if you live in a mobile home) remember these three things:

1. Grab your survival kit as well as your important papers.

2. Have a main route to the shelter planned out as well as alternates, just in case.

3. Do not forget about any pets (they might have to go to a separate shelter, which should be planned into your route accordingly), there supplies and important papers.

What should be done after the hurricane is over?

No matter where you decide to wait the storm out- do not leave before you absolutely certain it is safe to do so. Monitor your local radio station for directions and weather updates. When you do leave the safe area, make sure to watch for

any downed power lines (which you should always assume are active) as well as any damaged or weakened tree limbs.

After finding any loved ones that may have gotten separated from you, you can assess the damage to your property in order to start any insurance claim(s) that may be warranted. (Make sure beforehand, to check your insurance policy about flood damage, a lot of homeowners insurance does not cover it. Also, it is a good idea to have a list of all of your valuables, and a videotape of them if at all possible, tucked away with the important documents you grab when a disaster strikes.)

With a little foresight and a lot of planning, your family can all have peace of mind when it comes to what they should do in the event of a hurricane.